Dive into Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to qualitatively describe the empirical facts between the expectations and the reality of implementing inclusive education in Indonesia for children with special needs. The government's efforts to legitimize inclusive education for children with special needs in regular schools ranging from primary to secondary education have increasingly opened up opportunities for children with special needs to obtain quality educational services. However, good policies are not matched by the readiness of schools that are recommended to provide adequate facilities and support for learning resources. As a result, there are indications that the education of children with special needs in inclusive schools has not received educational services that match their needs. This study uses a library research design and primary and secondary sources to obtain research data. In other words, this library research limits its activities to collecting data through library collection materials (manual and internet) without the need for field research. In practice, this library research activity series relates to collecting library data, reading and taking notes, and processing research materials.

I. Introduction

The word "inclusive" comes from an English word that describes something positive in an attempt to incorporate children with disabilities practically and comprehensively into far-reaching lives (Obrusnikova & Block, 2020). Inclusive teaching is an educational method that combines the needs of children with special needs or special needs to concentrate together with public schools. In the end, theey become part of the area. According to Lieberman (2019), the keyword is how to create a healthy learning atmosphere (Lieberman et al., 2019).

In Comprehensive Learning Agreeable Climate, UNESCO (2007) provides a broader definition. Consideration means including children with disabilities, for example, those with problems seeing, hearing, inability to walk, slow learning, etc. Consideration can also mean that educational goals are for students with disabilities, in particular, learning goals for students with special needs (Lieberman et al., 2019; Manzoor & Asim, 2019; Pascariu, 2019). Incorporation can mean acknowledging disabled children into the school's educational plans, climate, social communication, and self-idea (vision-mission). Fuchs and Fuchs in Sutton (2021) state that most use the term incorporation to call for "full consideration," which implies the creation of a unique curriculum.

In a pedagogical sense, inclusion is associated with schooling, where children learn according to their unique needs so that there is no disappointment. An inclusive school is a place that brings together individuals from the local area, bringing together those with special needs, especially those who have special requirements and require special attention

to their specific needs. These needs can arise due to intrinsic or acquired disorder after birth, social conditions, or financial or political potential (Sutton et al., 2021). It is difficult to know who has special needs (Arum et al., 2020). Even various advantages (anomalies) are practically not detected. Was it not that they were utterly paralyzed or in wheelchairs?

Inclusive learning is a learning interaction aimed at tackling learning problems for children with exceptional needs in ordinary (regular) schools. It uses accessible assets to open doors for its setting to live in the public eye. The emphasis of inclusive schools for Sudarto (2019) is to rethink and change the teaching framework to suit students (Sudarto et al., 2019). In inclusive teaching, all children learn and get the same assistance in the learning system as normal children. Inclusive teaching can also be addressed to many people, not only children with disabilities. This way, instructors and schools are responsible for children's learning and learning centers around a customized educational program. Kamaliah (2019) puts a limit on inclusive instruction, a model for implementing inclusion programs for children with disabilities (uncommon requirement) held with ordinary children in all school foundations using the relevant education plan in the organization concerned. (Kamaliah, 2019).

Education is one of the efforts to improve the ability of human intelligence, thus he is able to improve the quality of his life (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). Education is expected to be able to answer all the challenges of the times and be able to foster national generations, so that people become reliable and of high quality, with strong characteristics, clear identities and able to deal with current and future problems (Azhar, 2018). Education and skills are the main keys in gaining social status in community life (Lubis *et al*, 2019).

Sapon-Shevin in Mardiana (2021) states that inclusive learning is characterized as exceptional learning with a curriculum that requires all extraordinary children to be served in normal schools and conventional classes with other regular students. In Sapon-Shevin's view, there is redevelopment in schools so that they become local areas that uphold the fulfillment of the unique needs of each child, which means rich assets and support from all educators and students (Mardiana & Khoiri, 2021). Pugach (2019) also quotes Stainback and Stainback, "A complete school is one in which all students are in the same class." This school provides learning programs that are appropriate, testing, but according to the abilities and needs of each student as well as the help and support that instructors can provide so that children are successful (Pugach et al., 2019).

Vaughn, Bos, and Schuman in Sunardi (2003), the term inclusion is often used interchangeably with the term mainstreaming, which in principle is characterized as giving equal roles and opportunities to those with special needs (children with special needs) (Romadhon et al., 2021). More than that, a well-equipped school is also a place where every child can be recognized, be a part of the class, and help each other with teachers and friends, as well as individuals from different regions, so that their single needs are met. Another definition of inclusive learning is made by Staub and Peck (Iskandar & Supena, 2021), proposing that inclusive learning is a light, moderate, and undeniable setting for children in general classrooms.

II. Review of Literature

History of Inclusive Education in Indonesia

Historical Background of Curriculum Development in Indonesia for the unique curriculum model for Children with Special Needs (ABK) in Indonesia, recent progress has led to changes in the current framework by the world view of the types of inclusive education.

Researchers concerned with inclusive education argue that the curriculum for inclusive education should be no different from their curriculum, which does not have shortcomings. So that the curriculum does not treat those with special needs explicitly or in isolation, but in an integrated manner (mainstreaming) with general training. Implementation of the 9-Year Basic Instruction Compulsory Training gives all young children the freedom, regardless of their disability, to obtain at least secondary school. As a result, individuals with disabilities can study together or coordinate with other children at the elementary and secondary school levels, even up to college (Widadhe, 2020).

The implementation of inclusive learning, especially for students with visual impairments, was initiated in several elementary schools in 1987 (Sunardi, 1994). This has also been determined by the Statement of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 0222/0/1979 concerning Implementation of Guidance and Improved Coordination of Coaching for Persons with Disabilities in Elementary Schools (Anwar, 2019; Ariandy, 2019; Kurnia & Hudaidah, 2021; Widadhe, 2020).

According to Hallahan in Rozak (2021), most of the teaching for individuals with disabilities in developing countries during the 1970s was carried out independently. In particular, schools offer special types of assistance for a group of children who have certain types of disabilities (Rozak, 2021). The problems in question are visual barriers (blindness), hearing problems (hard of hearing), discourse problems (disabled discourse), scientific disabilities (tunagrahita), and actual anomalies (hindered).

Currently, various ways have been done with this inclusive learning. With one belief that every child is unique and the learning index depends on the child's interests, learning experiences, prior knowledge, and the child's response to them. Therefore, conventional teaching modes will witness a paradigm shift in inclusive education. Where creativity, communication, and learner-centered learning make special needs, not an obstacle. Moreover, to meet the demands, teachers need to understand, create and provide space for children at the right opportunity so that learning becomes fun. This applies not only to children who can afford it but also to those who are differently able.

The gap has been bridged somewhat by the so-called inclusive approach to education. This ensures that all children receive the opportunity to be in the same class as their peers. In the process, they can study the curriculum to their fullest potential.

III. Research Method

The author's method in this study is based on library research. Library research is a series of activities related to collecting library data, reading and recording, and processing research materials. It is research that utilizes library resources to obtain research data. In this study, the author uses critical, descriptive research emphasizing the strength of the analysis of existing sources and data by relying on existing theories and concepts to be interpreted based on writings that lead to studies on inclusive education. The works come from experts or intellectuals who are competent in inclusive education.

IV. Results and Discussion

Nind (2014) investigated the relationship between inclusive research and inclusive education and concluded that inclusive research had under-explored the potential of inclusive education and could not explore the relationship between democracy and social justice in education. Inclusive education is teamwork and a responsibility shared by all schools. This is not the integration of disabled children with those who can afford regular schools but provides more choices for all children by setting up schools where all children can learn. All children experience learning difficulties at some stage or another. Therefore their learning needs must be supported by teachers and peers wherever they are in their respective communities. Trainers and administrators try unique things to address each student's unique learning needs, interests, and styles through the teaching-learning process. This is also required by the Right to Education Act (2009), which focuses on making children free from fear, anxiety, and trauma. A new approach called Constructive Alignment, which helps children to construct their knowledge and contemplate applying their learning, has been adopted by many institutions (Romadhon et al., 2021).

This paper mainly focuses on inclusive education as a measure to bridge the gap between capable and capable children with differences. Inclusion in education has been defined as "a commitment to educating every child, to the extent appropriate, in school. This involves bringing support services to the child (rather than transferring the child to services) and requiring only that the child will benefit from being in the classroom (rather than having to compete with other students)" (Fajri & Afriansyah, 2019).

Gottlieb, Alter, and Gottlieb, 1991; Kaufman et al., as cited in Gottlieb et al. (1991), researching inclusive education has suggested several academic and social consequences. For example, students have been found to perform worse academically in general education settings. These children have differences as a result. The classroom becomes more diverse. Therefore, it is increasingly necessary for teachers to be adequately equipped with knowledge and skills to facilitate the smooth learning of children in inclusive classes. Even in this case, the current mandate of free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 years in Indonesia is based on the principle of inclusive education. Behind this constructive step is the recognition of education as a fundamental right.

So many policies exist. However, regardless of the type and extent of disability, inclusion remains a distant reality for most children with disabilities. Various physical and social barriers continue to hinder their participation in education. To mention a few examples, inaccessible transportation, unsupported school facilities and infrastructure, unsupported classroom toilets, slippery floors, and inadequate lighting and ventilation pose obstacles to the education of children with special needs.

All these barriers need to be addressed and, as far as possible, moderated by all stakeholders to ensure an inclusive school environment. This requires the voluntary cooperation, involvement, and participation of various stakeholders, including government, school management, and children's families.

We should all sincerely understand that through inclusion, all children can take part in all aspects of school life. In this way, diversity is respected and enforced. Because each child brings unique and diverse experiences, needs, and strengths to their learning, the education system must be flexible and responsive to this diversity.

Several studies (Gelepithis & Giani, 2020) comprehensively review the entire education system. They recommended the public education system of public schools. It also recommends the concept of a neighborhood school. "The current social segregation in schools should be eliminated with the adoption of the neighborhood school concept at a

lower elementary stage where all children in the neighborhood will be required to attend schools in the region." The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 in article 24 states that education must be without discrimination and based on equal opportunity. The government must ensure an inclusive education system at all levels (Anugerah, 2020).

Inclusive education has been incorporated into various international and national declarations, policies, and laws. By the National Curriculum Framework, too, because since the 2013 Curriculum where inclusive education has been included, it is stated that children with disabilities often face an insensitive environment where their needs are entirely ignored. It is essential to create a fair classroom environment where students do not experience unfair treatment and are denied opportunities based on their gender or membership in an ethnic or minority group. On the other hand, the school culture should highlight students' identities as 'learners' and creates an environment that enhances the potential and interests of each child.

Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities comes with giving the government the responsibility to provide inclusive education; the Law mandates the government and appropriate local agencies to accept children with disabilities without discrimination and provide education and opportunities for activities, sports, and recreation on an equal basis with others.

Children with disabilities may need assistance or more time to complete assigned tasks. Thus, while planning, teachers should pay special attention to ensuring the participation of all.

The Law provides explicitly reasonable accommodation and necessary support individually or otherwise in an environment that maximizes academic and social development consistent with the goal of full inclusion. It emphasizes participation, progress in educational attainment, and completion rates for each student with a disability. The Principle of Inclusion in Educational Inclusion operates on the principle that all students begin by being placed in a regular education classroom, which must be at least as familiar as possible. There are no longer certain classes that include, among others, disabled or gifted children, street or working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, neglected children, or other backward social classes in one particular class.

Bouck (2006) states that inclusive education is not an obvious solution and should continue to be examined and understood at the secondary level. The data suggest that benefits and drawbacks exist for both settings in education. Teachers must believe that children can benefit from an inclusive, child-friendly learning environment. Such diversity of teachers welcomes diversity among the children in their classrooms. It helps their students learn to appreciate each child's contribution (Arum et al., 2020).

Teachers are willing to be flexible and modify their instruction to meet student's unique needs so they can succeed in the regular classroom. Children with special needs need regular and special educators' support and collaborative efforts. Effective classroom teachers are also influential team members. They know how to work with other people. Teachers who work well with children are fair, decisive, warm, and responsive, have patience and a sense of humor, and can build relationships with students. When there is a strong relationship between teacher and student, learning often occurs despite inappropriate techniques, materials, or other deficiencies. Effective teachers provide structure and expectations for students to have equal opportunities.

Both capable and different capable children will find it difficult to adjust to one another. Effective communication is one of the critical factors for removing these adjustment barriers. Effective teachers know that learning may take a long time and require many repetitions, but they have the patience to wait while the child learns.

The teacher's job is to design strategies that help all children learn. Teachers today use the principle of inclusion throughout their day. They structure their lessons and differentiate materials so all students can access age-appropriate material. This universal instruction design allows teachers to consider various ways information can be presented to reach all learners. In this way, inclusive classes help all students achieve whatever they want regardless of their learning differences.

Teachers should maintain a motivating learning environment for all children, including children with special learning needs. However, existing classrooms need to be barrier-free so that all children can be accommodated. Children with mobility problems who use assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, unique furniture, etc., should have easy access to and from school and be able to move around the school and in different classrooms. Some children may not be able to sit up without support. For many children, a table placed in front can provide adequate support. However, for children who have difficulty controlling their heads and keeping their bodies straight, unique chairs or chairs may be needed for extra support to maximize their physical ability to participate in class activities and assignments.

V. Conclusion

Inclusive education aims to help provide the most comprehensive opportunity in obtaining educational services to students with special needs compared to regular students. These differences in needs are caused by various shortcomings and limitations, including physical, emotional, behavioral, mental, and social limitations. Through the Act and a set of other regulations, the state has provided the broadest possible place and space for inclusive education.

For the school administrators, the implementation of inclusive education explicitly will be seen from the implementation of the new student admission process, where the school, without discrimination, will accept all students without seeing imperfections as a condition of acceptance. Inclusive education means accepting all students in public schools without discrimination. Students' differences need to be addressed positively as a form of diversity. Inclusion is not just placing students who have limitations in the main class. However, there is an acknowledgment that every child has special needs, and teachers are trained to facilitate the needs of students in inclusive classrooms.

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